GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:559
ANSWERED ON:14.05.2007
REGULATORY MECHANISM FOR THE ENVIRONMENT SECTOR
Adhalrao Patil Shri Shivaji;Adsul Shri Anandrao Vithoba

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether the World Bank has asked India to strengthen its multi-stake holder partnership and public participation in the environment sector as reported in `The Hindu` dated April 11, 2007;

(b) If so, whether the Government proposes to expand the regulatory mechanism to match the needs of the economy and successful global practices and to increase the capacity and accountability of the environmental regulator to keep pace with growing mandates and demands; and

(c) If so, the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA)

(a) to (c): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred to in reply to parts (a) to (c) of the Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 559 to be answered on 14.05.2007 regarding Regulatory Mechanism for the Environment Sector by Shri Anandrao V. Adsul and other:

(a) The World Bank in its report released in April 2007 titled, `Strengthening Institutions for Sustainable Growth Country Environment Analysis for India` has identified the need to strengthen multi-stakeholder partnership and public participation in the environmental sector. The report recommends development of a plan and its execution on a long term national basis for supporting participation of all the stake-holders in environmental management.

(b) The Government is aware of the need to expand the regulatory mechanisms to match the needs of growing economy and make it consistent with global best practices. It is consistently strengthening various regulatory and administrative mechanisms including the incentive mechanisms at the disposal of environmental agencies. The Government has been reviewing and exploring new regulatory programmes currently being practiced in developed countries, and has introduced different approaches for different categories of polluting sources, particularly targeting activities, other than large point sources, that cause significant cumulative environmental impacts. Some of the current programmes include effective packages for clusters of Small and Medium Enterprises that combine focused enforcement efforts with extensive outreach and compliance assistance, recognizing the vast diversity of regulated sources in applying national discharge standards.

(c) The Government is taking a number of steps to strengthen the capacity and accountability of environmental regulators to meet the growing demands. Re-engineering of the Environmental Clearance process was undertaken from the year 2001 onwards culminating in New Environmental Impact Assessment Notification issued on 14.9.2006. The objectives of this Notification were to make the Environmental Clearance process effective, efficient and decentralized. Further, to mitigate the impact on environment, a provision for Environment Impact Assessment study has been made in the above Notification in order that impacts of development projects are identified and mitigation measures formulated at the planning stage of the project. Apart from these, the Government is working to enhance capacity building for pollution management and providing resources and international knowledge to the environmental agencies/ other stake-holders.